April already wettest in a century

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Further rain is to come overnight tonight as outbreaks of heavy and possibly thundery rain affect southern England and Wales, so final rainfall figures for the month will change.

However, the UK has already seen 121.8 mm of rain so far - significantly more than the 69.6 mm you would normally expect for the month and beating the previous record of 120.3 mm set in 2000.

Many Met Office observation sites across the UK have broken their individual rainfall records, with six stations so far having seen more than three times their usual monthly average.

Liscombe in Somerset has seen the most rainfall, with 273.8 mm of rain - more than three times the 86.4mm average.

At the other extreme, Prestwick in Ayrshire has seen just 39.2 mm of rain and Skye has had just over half of its monthly rainfall - with 52 mm of its 99.5 mm average.

April has been in stark contrast to March, which was the fifth driest on record for the UK with 36.4 mm of rain (comparing to the average of 95.9 mm).

In another reversal of the norm, this April has also been cooler on average than March - the first time this has happened since 1998.

Figures which go up to 25th of this month show April's mean temperature is 6.1 °C compared to March's 7.7 °C.

No weather station across the UK has registered a temperature of 20 °C or above this month, which is the first time this has happened since 2006 (and 1989 before that). Again, this is in contrast to March where the 20 °C barrier was broken regularly.

Weather during these two contrasting and distinctly non-average months has been heavily influenced by the position of the jet-stream. In March it brought prolonged settled and unusually warm weather, but a shift in the jet stream's track has brought in unsettled weather for April.

Other interesting facts for April 2012:

- Much of the rainfall has been focused on the south of the UK, with England seeing more rainfall than Scotland.
- Despite the heavy rain experienced this month, sunshine amounts so far this month have not been far off the average.

Monthly figures for the whole of April 2012 will be available later this week.

RAINFALL AMOUNTS and PERCENTAGES OF NORMAL 1-29 April 2012
compared with 1971-2000 averages for the whole of April

Area	Actual (mm)	% of 1971-2000 average	Previous April record Amount (mm)	Year
UK	121.8*	175	120.3	2000
England	127.6	224	130.2	2000
Wales	147.9	173	193.9	1920
Scotland	115.2	133	191.1	1947
N Ireland	67.0	94	144.2	1961
England & Wales	130.4	214	132.6	2000
England N	130.6*	209	122.8	2000
England S	126.0	234	134.1	2000
Scotland N	116.4	123	214.1	1947
Scotland E	141.4	203	152	1934
Scotland W	85.9	92	213.3	1947
England E & NE	136.6*	250	135	2000
England NW & Wales N	116.0	153	146.3	1920
Midlands	129.4	227	136.6	2000
East Anglia	103.0	227	117.8	1998
England SW & Wales S	159.4	212	163.9	2000
England SE & Central S	124.8	237	145.3	2000

* Denotes a new record

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